REMARKS

This application has been carefully reviewed in light of the Office Action dated May 16, 2005. Claims 37 to 39 are now pending in the application, with Claims 1 to 36 having been cancelled. Reconsideration and further examination are respectfully requested.

Claims 1 to 26 were withdrawn from further consideration due to a restriction requirement, and Applicant notes that those claims have been cancelled herein.

Claims 30, 33 and 34 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, and Claim 35 was objected to for an informality. Inasmuch as Claims 30, 33, 34 and 35 have been cancelled, the rejections and the objection are believed to be obviated.

Claims 27, 31 to 33, 35 and 36 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) over U.S. Patent No. 6,405,214 (Meade), Claims 28 and 29 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) over Meade, and Claims 30 and 34 were rejected under § 103(a) over Meade in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,615,184 (Hicks). Inasmuch as the rejected claims have been cancelled, the rejections are believed to be obviated. Nonetheless, reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejections are respectfully requested.

Additionally, Applicant submits that newly-added Claims 37 to 39 are believed to be allowable over the art of record for at least the reasons set forth below. Further, Applicant submits that the invention defined by each of newly-added Claims 37 to 39 falls within the purview of the invention of elected Claims 27 to 36 since, for example, Claim 37 has been formulated based on Claim 27.

According to the present invention of Claims 37 to 39, a memory unit of a server stores consumable purchase results and consumable use rates in correspondence to login information, and stores a table that includes consumable purchase results in correspondence to services and a number of consumables to be purchased in correspondence to the services. When login information is received from a data processing apparatus, and the consumable purchase result corresponding to the received login information is read from the memory unit. Then, a demand estimation unit estimates,

based on the consumable use rate for a printer consumable stored in the memory unit in correspondence to the received login information and a predetermined term (3 months, for example, as seen in Fig. 7) designated by the data processing apparatus, a demand of the consumable within the predetermined term. A reception unit receives from the data processing apparatus the number of consumables to be purchased that can be designated or changed in the data processing apparatus, and a service selection unit refers to the table to read the services corresponding to the received number of consumables and the services corresponding to the read consumable purchase, and selects at least one of the read services. A transmission unit transmits information on the estimated demand of the consumable and the at least one selected service to the data processing apparatus such that the information may be displayed in the data processing apparatus, and an order reception unit receives from the data processing apparatus an order based on the at least one transmitted service.

Thus, in the present invention, one service can be selected from among a plurality of services corresponding to a plurality of factors including a consumable purchase result and the number of consumables to be purchased. The demand of a certain consumable used in the printer can be estimated based on the consumable use rate for the consumable and a predetermined term designated by the user. Therefore, it is possible to allow the user to make a decision on the selected service based on the number of consumables to be purchased.

The art of record, alone or in any permissible combination, is not seen to disclose or to suggest the features of the present invention, and in particular is not seen to disclose or to suggest at least the feature of estimating, based on (a) a consumable use rate for a consumable used in a printer stored in a memory unit in correspondence to received login information and (b) a predetermined term designated by a data processing apparatus through a communication channel, a demand of the consumable within the predetermined term, referring to a table to read (a) services corresponding to a received number of consumables to be purchased, and (b) services corresponding to the read consumable

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purchase result, and selecting at least one of the read services, transmitting information on the estimated demand of the consumable within the predetermined term to the data processing apparatus, transmitting information on the at least one selected service to the data processing apparatus such that the information may be displayed in the data processing apparatus, and receiving from the data processing apparatus an order based on the transmitted at least one service.

Meade is merely seen to teach providing a discount for consumables based on a printing profile. (See column 5, lines 11-18.) However, Meade is not seen to disclose or to suggest at least the feature of estimating, based on (a) a consumable use rate for a consumable used in a printer stored in a memory unit in correspondence to received login information and (b) a predetermined term designated by a data processing apparatus through a communication channel, a demand of the consumable within the predetermined term, referring to a table to read (a) services corresponding to a received number of consumables to be purchased, and (b) services corresponding to the read consumable purchase result, and selecting at least one of the read services, transmitting information on the estimated demand of the consumable within the predetermined term to the data processing apparatus, transmitting information on the at least one selected service to the data processing apparatus such that the information may be displayed in the data processing apparatus, and receiving from the data processing apparatus an order based on the transmitted at least one service.

Hicks is merely seen to teach retaining a purchase history for each customer. However, Hicks is not seen to disclose or to suggest at least the feature of estimating, based on (a) a consumable use rate for a consumable used in a printer stored in a memory unit in correspondence to received login information and (b) a predetermined term designated by a data processing apparatus through a communication channel, a demand of the consumable within the predetermined term, referring to a table to read (a) services corresponding to a received number of consumables to be purchased, and (b) services corresponding to the read consumable purchase result, and selecting at least one of the read services,

transmitting information on the estimated demand of the consumable within the predetermined term to the data processing apparatus, transmitting information on the at least one selected service to the data processing apparatus such that the information may be displayed in the data processing apparatus, and receiving from the data processing apparatus an order based on the transmitted at least one service.

Allen is merely seen to teach printing a coupon for the purchase of a consumable when the consumable is exhausted. However, Allen is not seen to disclose or to suggest at least the feature of estimating, based on (a) a consumable use rate for a consumable used in a printer stored in a memory unit in correspondence to received login information and (b) a predetermined term designated by a data processing apparatus through a communication channel, a demand of the consumable within the predetermined term, referring to a table to read (a) services corresponding to a received number of consumables to be purchased, and (b) services corresponding to the read consumable purchase result, and selecting at least one of the read services, transmitting information on the estimated demand of the consumable within the predetermined term to the data processing apparatus, transmitting information on the at least one selected service to the data processing apparatus such that the information may be displayed in the data processing apparatus, and receiving from the data processing apparatus an order based on the transmitted at least one service.

Moreover, any permissible combination of Meade, Hicks and/or Allen also would not disclose or suggest at least the feature of estimating, based on (a) a consumable use rate for a consumable used in a printer stored in a memory unit in correspondence to received login information and (b) a predetermined term designated by a data processing apparatus through a communication channel, a demand of the consumable within the predetermined term, referring to a table to read (a) services corresponding to a received number of consumables to be purchased, and (b) services corresponding to the read consumable purchase result, and selecting at least one of the read services, transmitting information on the estimated demand of the consumable within the predetermined term to
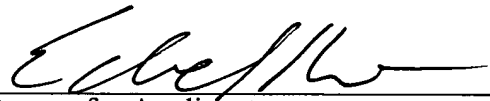
the data processing apparatus, transmitting information on the at least one selected service to the data processing apparatus such that the information may be displayed in the data processing apparatus, and receiving from the data processing apparatus an order based on the transmitted at least one service.

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, Claims 37 to 39 are believed to be allowable.

No other matters having been raised, the entire application is believed to be in condition for allowance and such action is respectfully requested at the Examiner's earliest convenience.

Applicant's undersigned attorney may be reached in our Costa Mesa, California office by telephone at (714) 540-8700. All correspondence should continue to be directed to our address given below.

Respectfully submitted,

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